Appendix B: John Adams to Abigail Adams Letter 1, July 3, 1776

The following images were scanned from a letter written by John Adams to his wife, Abigail Adams, on July 3, 1776.
Philadelphia July 2, 1776

I am happy to hear of your arrival at New York, and to learn that you had taken a journey to New York to see your friends in the legation. I hope you will have time to visit them. The news from France will be an encouragement, and will prove your health. How happy would it have made me to have taken this journey with you.

I was informed, a day or two before the receipt of your letter, that you were gone to New York, by Mr. Pickering, who was looking enough in your neighbourhood as far as the distance of a post, which would have been the last of an accomplished Pretender.

I am very glad you had the opportunity of seeing one of our little American men of war. Many thanks to you, and I hope you will show them in such a manner as to make them known to the gentlemen of the legation.

I rejoice extremely at the prospect of opening a hospital. I hope the business will be done upon a larger scale. I hope that our hospital will be attended in every county, and that it will be placed in every county, if not every town. I am happy to find you so well, and that the children are well, in the first place. I am happy, and that I may be of any assistance to them.

I have a favour to ask, and that is, that in your future letter, you would mention the receipt of all things you may receive from me, and mention their value. By this means I shall know if any of mine miscarried.

The information you give me of our friends at Paris, and the expected change, has given me much pain, grief, and anxiety. I believe I shall be obliged to follow his example. I have not fortune enough to support my family, and what is of more importance, to support the dignity of that station.
It is too high and light up, for me, who delight in nothing so much as Retire, Solitude, Silence, and Officiency... In private Life, no one has a Right to confine me for following my own Inclinations, in Retirement, Simplicity, Frugality... in public Life, every Man has a Right to Men and as he pleases, at least he thinks so.

Yesterday, the great Question was decided, which was to be debated in America, and a greater perhaps never was or will be decided among Men. A Resolution was passed without one opposing it. "That it is wished, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, and as such, they have, and of Right ought to have full Power to make War, conclude Peace, establish Government, and to all the arts and sciences, which other States may right fully do." You will see in a few days a Declaration setting forth the grounds, which have impelled us to this mighty Resolution, and the Reasons which will justify it, in the light of God and man. A Day of Consideration will be taken up in a few days.

When I look back to the Year 1761, and recall the argument concerning want of Affitude, in the Superior Court, which I was bidden to prejudge as the Governor of the Colony, between Great Britain and America, and run through the whole Period from that Time to this, and recall the spirit of political caution which in those Transactions was carried, and the spirit of caution in all Transactions, I am surprised at the suddenness of the change, as well as greatness of this Revolution. Britain has been pulled with folly, and America with Wisdom, at Craf this is my Judgment. — Time must determine. It is the Will of Heaven, that the two Countries should be bonded forever. It may be the Will of Heaven, that America shall suffer. (A Proverb) the Soldier in making and dispelling yet more dead souls — if this is to be the God's work, it will have their good effect, at least. It will inspire us with many Virtues, which we have not and, must many Errors, follies, and Vices, which have stood, old honest, and old glory. — The Framework of Affluence produces Affluence in States, as well as Individuals. And the new Governments must live on the same, to prevent, or they will be no Benefits. The People will have innumerable ruin — and the People are estranged by abolishing of corruptions and Vices, as well as the Great, but I must submit all my Hopes and Trust, in my Country's resolution, in which, I firmly believe.